

## Wireless Priority Services Program

**Purpose:** The Office of the Manager, National Communications System (OMNCS) is required by Executive Order 12472 and additional national policy directives to develop a responsive, survivable, and enduring national telecommunications infrastructure to support national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunication needs of the Federal Government. The National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC), a Presidential-industry advisory committee, identified the need for wireless priority service and recommended to President Clinton that such a service be established for NS/EP users. President Clinton concurred with the recommendation and on January 11, 1995, directed the National Communications System (NCS) to work with industry and Government to implement wireless priority services (WPS). These national policy directives also direct the Manager, NCS, to identify and investigate various technologies that may assist Federal organizations in fulfilling NS/EP telecommunications objectives. As part of this effort, the OMNCS established the WPS program to conduct technical analyses and research and development focused on identifying wireless solutions. The WPS program supports Presidential Decision Directive 63 and the Chief Infrastructure Assurance Office policies on critical telecommunications. It also seeks to influence technology and support the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Network Reliability and Interoperability Council recommendations to ensure reliability of emerging markets and technologies.

### Background:

**Cellular:** Several recent natural disasters in the United States have proven the applicability and usefulness of cellular telephony in providing emergency telecommunications for the local, State, and Federal officials who assist in emergency response. Heavy cellular traffic may be generated in the aftermath of disasters, resulting in congestion on surviving cellular system assets. The WPS program seeks ways to help ensure that NS/EP users can overcome blockage in these systems when they need them most.

**Satellite:** The WPS program provides an opportunity to study and influence emerging satellite communications technologies. Through this program, the OMNCS assesses and documents new and experimental satellite communication capabilities, and evaluates the applicability of these new technologies to existing and future NS/EP requirements.

**Emerging Technologies:** The WPS program analyzes the emerging wireless technologies (beyond cellular and satellite) to identify improved approaches for Federal entities to fulfill their NS/EP objectives. Major areas being studied include personal communication services (PCS), wireless data, enhanced specialized mobile radio (ESMR), land mobile radio (LMR) Project 25/34, broadband satellite systems, and third generation (3G) wireless.

### Highlights:

#### Program:

- ☐ Investigating the availability of a nationwide wireless priority capability for disaster response.
- ☐ Pursuing commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) technology solutions are being pursued, that enhance wireless call completion.
- ☐ Interfacing with federal and industry entities to influence wireless technology developments: Federal Wireless User's Forum; Public Safety Wireless Network; Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association
- ☐ Working toward implementation across major service providers by 2002.

#### Technology:

- ☐ The OMNCS has collaborated with NASA on the Advanced Communications Technology Satellite (ACTS) program and has evaluated use of government and commercial systems for NS/EP deployment.
- ☐ Priority enhancements are being discussed with new emerging satellite service providers: ICO; Globalstar; and Iridium.
- ☐ Standardization of Wireless Intelligent Network (WIN) radio queuing technology provides great promise for NS/EP.
- ☐ The use of a WIN Service Control Point database offers the ability to connect several service providers to an NS/EP database.

**Contact Information:** Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Wireless Priority Services Program Office.

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